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THE IMPERIAL STANDARD OF KULTUR.

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

Why Roumania Doesn't Fight.

It is not only because she fears a débâcle if she attempts to cross the wooded Carpathians into Hungary, or because she is pretty certain to be caught on her flank by her enemy, Bulgaria, as soon as she is at Tsar Ferdinand's mercy, but for other and softer reasons that Roumania does not fight. And not the least potent of these is the supplication of Roumania's beautiful English Queen. The Marchioness of R—, who is Queen Alexandra's greatest friend, tells me that the Queen of Roumania is strongly opposed to her husband's people entering into the European conflagration. I am also able to state that King George himself has done absolutely nothing that shall induce Roumania to throw away her "benevolent neutrality" until an act of hostility is performed against her of such a character as will make her entry into the struggle moral and defensible.

Italy's Game of Grab.

As for Italy, I am also able to say that his Majesty has absolutely declined to say one word which shall influence that country in its attitude to the war. At St. James's, I may add, it is regarded as highly improbable that Italian statesmen will be so mad as to enter the war, when the sole object is to seize territory which was peacefully ceded to Austria many years ago. If Italy enters upon this game of "grab" she will have to take the consequences, and should she fail to succeed she would probably cease to occupy her present place in the comity of nations. The time has not arrived when British public opinion will admit the right of nations to make war upon each other without a clear and legitimate *casus belli*. The nation which does so must still be counted a nation of brigands, and beyond the civilised pale.

Not Good Enough for George Rex.

That is why no countenance whatever has been afforded at the Court of St. James to the desire of Portugal to butt in in the war. The King knows, of course, that Portugal doesn't want to fight merely to help Britain out of a mess. Not by a long chalk. Portuguese enthusiasm for the war has its inspiration solely in military glory for the fighting-men, and territorial aggrandisement on the Congo for the Portuguese Republic under the ægis of Britain! And that isn't good enough for George Rex.

When Germany is Finally on the Floor.

Anybody who calls upon Roumania, Italy, Portugal, Greece and Sweden to come along and help us get quits with the Germans is simply doing his best to prolong the war and make peace impossible. Lord

Kitchener doesn't require any outside assistance, thank you. All he requires is the continued staunchness of France and Russia, and that every British lad who can hold a gun shall go and do his duty. The war may last another five years, but the longer it takes the severer will be the whacking Germany will get when finally she is on the floor.

Roumania Not Going To "Foul Her Own Nest!"

The Queen of Roumania, like so many other incorrigible flirts, is a woman with an unusually tender heart, and the deepest feelings of compassion for all who suffer in the war. And she is determined that her family shall do nothing to precipitate a crisis that may have the most terrible results both for Roumania and for her husband's dynasty. After all, King Ferdinand is a Hohenzollern, though, as I pointed out not many weeks ago, between the Berlin Hohenzollerns and the Sigmaringen Hohenzollerns there has never been much love lost. At the same time, the late King Carol, who died a few weeks ago, made strenuous efforts to keep on good terms with Germany all his life, greatly to the benefit of Roumania, which has eighty millions of German capital sunk in her enterprises.

Roumania Not Looking For Trouble.

And for Roumania to deliberately enter upon a war of aggression against the two remnants of the Triple Alliance would in all probability bring about the isolation and disruption of the Roumanian kingdom, for German vengeance upon her would be as certain as that the sun shines. Nothing could avert it. Germany already has the Roumanian King's late uncle, King Carol, to thank for having given Belgium its first intimation of the Kaiser's design to swarm across Belgian soil immediately war was made upon France—a little hint that resulted in the new Belgian military law, which, had the war happened just a year later, would probably have prevented Germany entering France at all.

Why Liege, Namur and Antwerp Fell.

As it was, the seven hundred thousand conscripts which Belgium designed to put in the field in case of invasion fell short of that number by no less than 400,000. Hence the rapid fall of Liege, Namur and Antwerp, and the rush of Von Kluck and the Crown Prince to Paris, and the narrow escape of that magnificent city from bombardment.

Curious Relationships of the Roumanian Royalties.

The Queen of Roumania is still in the thirties, and yet she has sons and daughters grown up, and getting engaged. By a remarkable dynastic trick, she and her husband, King Ferdinand, have prior rights to the throne of England to our King George, in point of primogeniture. King Ferdinand is a Stuart of the elder line, and his wife is the first British Princess since Henrietta, daughter of our King Charles I., who has married a Catholic, and also the first who has married a descendant of that Henrietta.

King of Roumania's Excellent Reason For Disliking War.

Her children can boast descent from Queen Victoria, Charles I., Henry IV. of France, Empress Marie-Theresa, and from the Tsars Nicholas I. and Peter the Great, and also from the humble village innkeeper who was father of the Murats. The Queen is, of course, the eldest daughter of the late Duke of Edinburgh, King Edward's eldest brother. As her husband is the son of that Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, who was the direct cause of the war between France and Germany in 1870, the King and Queen of Roumania have very good reason to remember that war is a horrible disaster for any country.

"Welcome!"—to the Dear Germans.

You know what I said last week about the welcome which some of our sloppy ones will give to the dear

Germans when the war is over. I daresay you thought I was joking. But I wasn't. It's too serious a matter. But it seems incredible, doesn't it, that after the thousands of instances of the abuse of honourable warfare by the Kaiser's troops, and the British widows and orphans who have been made by machine-gun fire from German Red Cross vans, that the day is not far distant when we shall smile and fawn upon the dear Herrs, the polite waiters, and the delicatessen-providers from Germany? I know you think it utterly ridiculous that such a thing could happen. Still, it is more than likely. Read this, from the pen of Mr. Walter G. Bell, of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, to the Editor of the *Daily Chronicle*:—

* * *

Brotherly Love for the Germans from Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

"Believing, as we all do, that Europe is at present under a hideous nightmare, ought we not rather to be preparing to give the right hand of fellowship to our present enemies, as soon as Europe, and Germany, as a part of it, awakens from this nightmare to the dawns of a vision of the brotherhood of man"? It is difficult for a calm, responsible scribe like myself to express my disgust at this effusion from Trinity Hall, Cambridge. I can only hint at what I should like to do to Mr. Walter G. Bell. The other day a London Stipendiary Magistrate, faced with a man who absolutely refused to go to the colours, told him "he ought to have a bomb dropped on his head."

* * *

A Precedent from Oxford.

In regard to the present case, I have a shrewd idea of the fate this letter to the *Chronicle* would win for its writer had he been an alumnus of Oxford. I have seen a man dragged from his bed at midnight, and ducked in Tom Quad, for merely writing a humorous skit on the Dean of Christchurch. At Trinity Hall, Cambridge, of course, Mr. Walter G. Bell may be able to write what he chooses. But it is surprising that it should be so.

A Bright Light Shines!

Bit by bit we get at the truth about lots of funny things about the war. At the present time "Expediency," "Diplomacy," "Reasons of State"—call it what you will—makes mysteries of many things that keep the public wondering. Now and again, however, in some quite unexpected way, and in channels which defy the vigilance of the Press Censor, a bright light shines. And a light has shone quite unexpectedly on the means by which those wicked German cruisers, and wicked German Zeppelins, were able to pop their bombs and shells on British soil, and even to go poking about down Sandringham-way after King George. And the source of the information has significance of a kind which you would never expect. It appears in a letter to the *Times*, signed C. A. Lubbock, Oakley, Bromley Common, Kent.

And the letter says: "Since the abolition of the coast-guards, no systematic outlook on our coasts has been kept." And, in proof of the danger that has followed this abolition of the coast-guards, the writer instances the case of Miss Harding, of Lyme Regis, who, having dined out with her parents in the town, discerned through the darkness enveloping the sea a black mass tossing about on the waves, and, being young and alert, she gave notice to the police, and the half-dead survivors of one of our torpedoed cruisers were rescued from a watery grave. One of them was actually brought back to life by a dog sitting on him and licking his face until animation was restored.

* * *

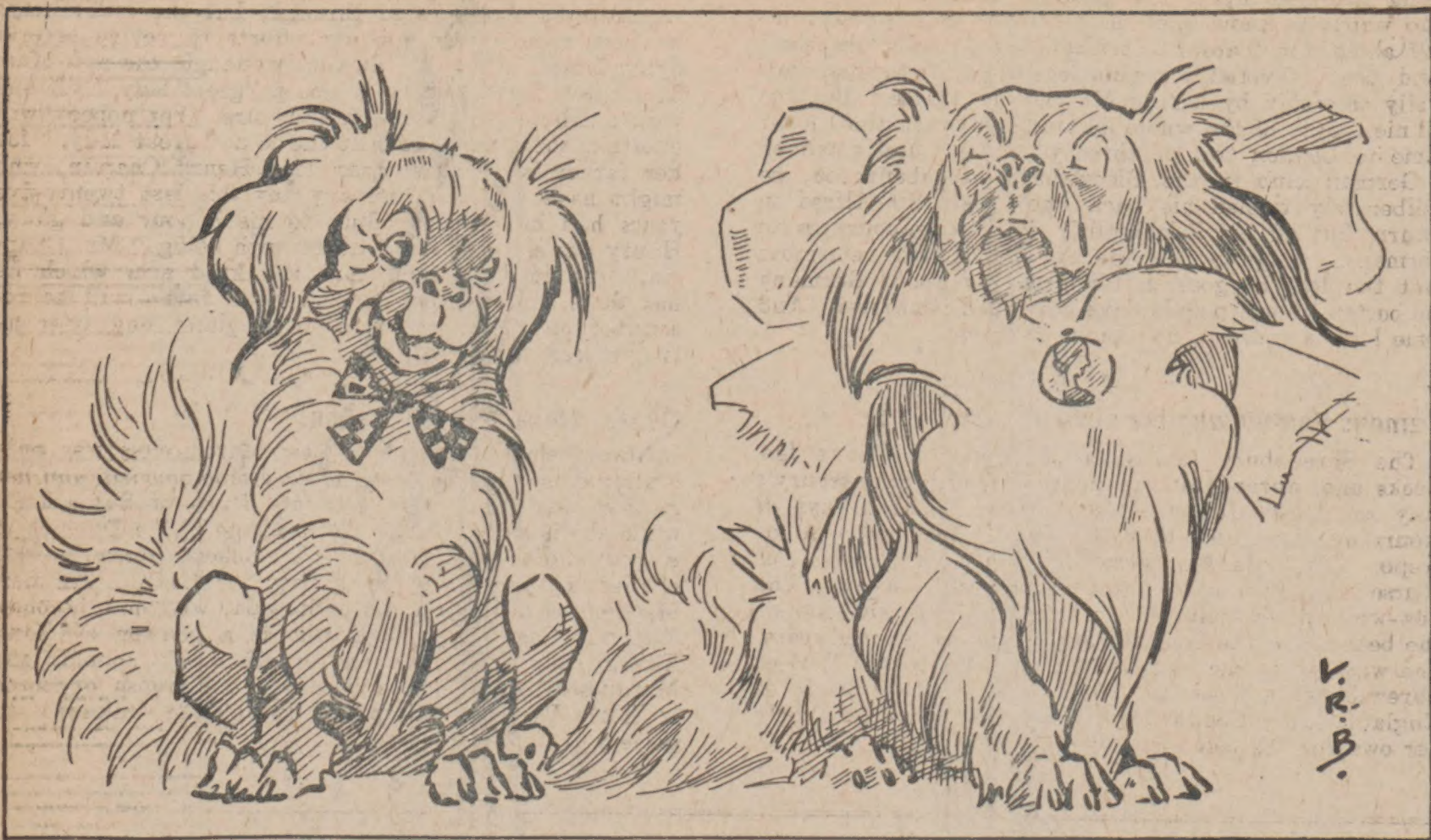
Mr. Lubbock in Sardonic Mood.

Miss Harding said that if the Government had not abolished the coast-guard station on the cliff at Pinhay, more of the men might have been saved. Mr. Lubbock, who betrays a subtle cynicism towards the powers that be over the abolition of the coast-guard, has this parting dig for Mr. Winston Churchill: "If the Government have not the men to perform the duties of coast-guards, why not enroll the women. Some of the girls would make excellent coast-guards"!



Cavalry Instructor: "Wot the divvie d'yer think yer doin'?"

Recruit (late member of orchestra): "The bloomin' 'oss don't seem to know what *rallentando* means when I tell 'im."



The Five-hundred Guinea Darling: "Of course you never let her kiss you on the nose?"
The Twenty Guinea Cough-drop: "Well, really, since she took to using the new 'cream and treacle' beauty mixture, I have given her a little more license, what?"

Castle that nearly Tumbled into the Sea.

The joke of the letter lies in the not-too-obvious fact that the family which the war has placed in the direst peril is that of Lubbock. Bromley Common is only one of the spots in Kent where the Lubbocks most do congregate, but their historic roof-tree is Kingsgate Castle, the pretty old-world, castellated mansion which, at a distance of a mile or so, appears actually to hang over the sea-cliff off the North Foreland. As a matter of fact, it did overhang the cliff once. Only a very substantial and expensive shoring up of the cliff saved it from tumbling into the waves.

Perched on the most precipitous eminence at the extreme corner of Kent, Kingsgate Castle by day must simply make the German naval officers' mouths water. To pop a dozen bombs on it, and to utterly destroy this English bower of wealth and ease, would just about make the Huns jump for joy. We hope dear old Lady Avebury has now quitted it, and gone off to Farnborough. If not, she may expect a visitation one of these days.

* * *

Some Lively Emotions.

Now, if it should have happened that the coast-guard at the North Foreland has disappeared along with the coast-guard "on the cliff at Pinhay," you may well imagine the lively emotions that prompted that little letter to the *Times*. Anyway, we trust no Germans will succeed in dropping bombs on the family of old Lord Avebury, for, dead though he be, we owe him more than we can ever repay, and his numerous sons and daughters deserve all the protection their countrymen can afford them.

* * *

A British General and the Dear Germans.

There are few men on the military superannuated list who have given more devoted service to fitting out our London Volunteers for the war than my dear old friend, Major-General Sir Alfred Turner. I have already acknowledged his services before, in connection with the gallant Kensingtons, who have now been in the trenches

or in the firing-line for months, and how I came to witness their "Farewell" that bright Sunday morning when Princess Louise stepped over from Kensington Palace to bid them "God-speed" and a "safe return." Alas! poor lads, the "safe return" for some of them is no longer within the realm of the possible. Of the Kensingtons, Sir Alfred Turner is Honorary Colonel, and he has cause to be proud of them, and they of him. But now I have a growl to make against the gallant General.

* * *

A Notable Champion of the Huns.

Sir Alfred has been addressing the Westminster Brotherhood in the Wesleyan Central Hall, and has been telling them that in his own personal opinion the war could not last many months longer! Now, this might seem a well-founded opinion, coming as it does from a British general, only it happens that the worst possible prophet about everything German is Sir Alfred Turner. In those silly days when it was almost high treason to suggest that German armaments were intended for us, no one was more blatant in howling down anybody who suggested that Germany wanted something we'd got, and meant to have it, than Alfred Turner. His contempt for those who saw Germany and the Germans as they really were was colossal. He would boldly inform you that he had made twenty journeys to Germany, and the idea of Germany, the land of "kultur," peace, philosophy, and lager-beer, being bent upon a war of aggression against England—well, humph, tush and bah to you, sir!

* * *

"An Absurd Chimera, Haw-haw!"

Alfred Turner would squirm with anger at the notion. Said he, "The idea that, haw-haw, prevails in the minds of some unthinking persons, haw-haw, that Germany contemplates invading England, is merely regarded as a silly nightmare, sir! The idea only prevails, I say, in the minds of timid individuals, haw-haw! I insist, sir, that the idea that Germany and her ruler contemplate attacking England is, God-damme, an absurd chimera. Haw-haw-haw!"

And so the dear old boy would run on, colouring up to his eyebrows at the mere notion of this foul libel being fastened upon the peaceful German. Anybody who wants to know when Alfie Turner thus spread himself about the "absurd chimeras," the "silly phrases" and the "fevered imaginations" of Britishers, can easily ascertain by asking Mr. Arnold White. But the funniest part of the whole joke is, that when the Kaiser came to London two or three years ago, and attended a German club in the Bloomsbury neighbourhood, he deliberately turned his back upon poor Sir Alfred in return for all his lickspittling and his vapourings to Germany. Anyway, I hope Sir Alfred will remember that the less he goes in for prophecy about Germany the better. Some people have very good memories. And some have a rather acute sense of decency!

* * *

Famous Family who are always in Mourning.

The Shrewsbury family, as I remarked but a few weeks ago, apropos of the death of Lord Shrewsbury's only son, Lord Ingestre, seems fated to be always in mourning, and now they are in for another spell of crepe. The late Marquess of Londonderry was, of course, the Earl of Shrewsbury's brother-in-law. The now-widowed Marchioness of Londonderry was one of the beauties of the Court of Queen Victoria's later years. She was one of the daughters of the nineteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, and as the Talbots are premier earls of England, Lady Londonderry has had a place peculiarly her own for the last forty years.

Henry Chaplin's Daughter.

And she has used that position well. It would be difficult to enumerate the various good works which she has inaugurated and carried through, but she will always be best remembered for her efforts to revive several dying Irish industries. Curiously enough, the new Marchioness of Londonderry is also a "great lady," yet one with a simple country squire for sire. Yet nobody will question the statement that she is a "great lady," for her father is no other than Mr. Henry Chaplin, who might have been an earl any day this last twenty-five years had he chosen. But, to his honour and glory, Henry has always been satisfied with being "Mr. Chaplin," for it is as such that the kind acts which he has done, and blushed to find them fame, will be recounted on every racecourse in England long after he is gathered to his fathers.

* * *

Queen Alexandra's God-Son.

Nevertheless, though the new Marchioness was once "plain Miss Chaplin," she is very blue-blooded, and her mother was a sister of the late Duke of Sutherland, while she is a great-niece by marriage of the Duchess of Argyll, and she was reared by a duchess in consequence of her mother dying in giving her birth. The new Marchioness has a son, Lord Stewart, who now becomes Viscount Castlereagh, and who is a god-son of King Edward and Queen Alexandra. Curiously enough, the Marquesses of Londonderry sit in the House of Lords as Earls Vane, a title which is actually unknown to Society!



Inquisitive Lady: "And where were you wounded, may I ask?"

Belgian (who understands English, but won't trust himself to speak it): "Au menton, Madame."

Inquisitive Lady: "At Mentone? Dear, dear! Now I always thought Mentone was in Italy. Wonderful how this war teaches you geography!"

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

The Blushes of the Flippant Flappers.

I went the other day to hear a lecture by that brilliant man, Dr. C. W. Saleeby. Dr. Saleeby, as you will know, is one of the leaders of the Eugenists—the leader, I think I might say. He is an intensely devoted follower of the late Sir Francis Galton, whom he proudly refers to as “my illustrious master,” and Sir Francis Galton was the funny old gentleman whose efforts to induce the British people to breed prize babies with the ease with which they breed prize Pomeranians were so ridiculed in his lifetime. And although Dr. Saleeby and his Eugenists are not being laughed at to-day to anything like the extent that Sir Francis Galton was, and although they have a certain powerful following, by the majority of the British people they are looked upon as faddists or fools, or a mixture of both. Possibly that is what they are; possibly that is just what they are not.

After telling us in the early part of his lecture that we, the great and glorious British people, are descended from fishes and frogs and apes, and such like objectionable things, Dr. Saleeby went on to point out that, as in the past, our population to-day, in both quality and quantity, absolutely depends upon the principles of evolution. From this very obvious remark the learned lecturer went on to enquire how the principles of evolution are being affected in the great big war of which you have doubtless heard. And he came to the conclusion, and drummed it into us in a very polite yet very determined manner, that the principles of evolution are in a bad way, and, more than likely, will soon be out of work and looking for a job. Indeed, the lecturer got so dead-earnest about this that I fully expected the ghost of Darwin to appear through a trap-door on the platform and give him what is called, I believe, in drawing-room circles, a bash over the eye.

It appeared that he was only working round to his point, something like I am doing at the present moment. And when Dr. Saleeby did get to his point it was a very fruity point. Indeed, it was so fruity that a whole lot of lappers and nuts and other respectable people in the part of the hall where I was sitting suddenly appeared to be making valiant attempts to stand on their heads, or tear themselves into little bits, so shaky and shivery did they seem at the point the lecturer was trying to make. But even worse than that happened. A flapper of the mature age of about fifteen, sitting next-door to me, actually blushed. And if a modern young lady of the mature age of fifteen can be made to blush by a lecturer, you can bet your last case of champagne that that lecturer has made a remark.

Dr. Saleeby had made a remark. He had told us, a respectable and great and glorious British audience, that the breeding of the country was going to the devil, and that if we didn't rapidly cotton-on to some of the methods of our famous breeders of bulldogs, we and the Empire and the whole caboodle would be in the soup or the frying pan, or some other place of which Shakespeare spoke. In connection with the war, of course. That is what he was referring to. As a Eugenist, a scientific breeder of bulldog-men, Dr. Saleeby appeared quite upset. I was quite sorry for him. He is not a very Herculean gentleman at the best of times. He is a bit pale and long and weedy by nature (which is perhaps why he is so anxious to improve the race). And this was what he was so upset about—that thousands and thousands of the finest thing in papas that could possibly be imagined are being killed off at the front, the most gallant young men of the country, in fact, and, of course, those of the most magnificent physique. And perhaps a million of such men would have disappeared, without having had a chance of performing paternal work, by the time the war was ended. That was what so upset Dr. Saleeby.

But there was worse to come. Ye Gods! to think what my dear grandfather and grandmother would have said

if they had heard it! And a mixed audience, too! Ha, ha! It makes me smile. We are certainly getting on, getting away from the mid-Victorian cant about matters of sex when it is possible for a distinguished public lecturer to advocate the things that Dr. Saleeby is advocating, and especially the very sensible thing (but, oh, so shocking—don't read any further, if you are a Sunday-school teacher) that I am now going to hit you right in the face with. I don't know whether you will be able to stand it, for I know that the readers of MODERN LIFE are, and quite rightly, very critical. But what Dr. Saleeby advocated was this—that hundreds and thousands of the magnificent men who are going to the front to die should be induced to marry before they go, so that, whatever happens to them, the best physique of the country, and, equally important, the most patriotic spirit of the country, may be represented and carried on in the children who will arrive after they, the fathers, are dead. You will see at once the enormous significance of this. You will understand how it was that the flappers blushed. And you will understand still better when I tell you that, reading between the lines of the lecturer's advocacy of his cause, I could only come to the conclusion that rather than have the breed of Britishers suffer owing to the war, Dr. Saleeby would have every gallant soldier now going to the front a possible father, married or not. And that was what hit Dr. Saleeby's audience flat in the eye, as if they had one and all simultaneously been smitten with an American flapjack about twenty yards square. That was what made me long that I had the power to call from the grave the mid-Victorian fossilised old footlers who demoralised England by their piffing prudery in sexual matters, to put them right in front of that brilliant lecturer, and make them listen to a little bit of life and truth as it really is. I suppose the old footlers would have literally died of fright. As I have said, even a present-day audience shied at it a bit. But they quickly pulled themselves together, directly the lecturer's point had got right home. And then what do you think they did? They cheered—men, women, nuts and flappers, almost every one of them. Like a flash, a bit of the statesman-mind had permeated every member of the audience—a bit of the Bismarck sort of mind that knows that there are no such things as morality and immorality when it is a question of national welfare, of mortality or immortality, for a State that is fighting with its back to the wall, and that is not content to see an ultimate victory turned into national and racial disaster for lack of the virile children upon whom a State must of necessity depend.

Let the soldiers all get married and do their racial duty before going across the Channel to do their soldierly duty. That is the dogma that Dr. Saleeby preaches. And as a humble admirer of this brilliant man, I venture to say (putting aside all flippancy and frivolity) that it is a doctrine that deserves to commend itself to every man and woman, every nut and flapper, who, behind the lighter and perhaps more attractive side of life, has sometimes a serious thought for the future welfare of the glorious race to which he or she belongs. Nothing can be the same after this war. It is cutting the thought and the life of Englishmen (and, of course, other nationalities) right in two. Whether we win or lose (and I think I know which it will be) our country and our people can never be the same again. But if at the present time we face the music, not only on the battlefields of France, but on the battlefields at home upon which are waged the social-problem fights that are of such enormous importance to the future of England, we are bound to get through as a people and an Empire with flying colours. In my humble opinion, Dr. Saleeby is frankly and fearlessly facing the music at home. And that is why I was quite glad to see the sweet little flappers taking it all in (after their first big blush) at Dr. Saleeby's lecture, and learning in a nice and entertaining sort of way the great truth that their mothers and their grandmothers never knew—that there is nothing in the least to blush about in connection with the great processes of nature by which flippant flappers become the mothers of great men.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Whether her old-time guest, Prince Lichnowsky, the ex-German Ambassador in London, sent his condolences to Lady Londonderry?

Whether the British Admiralty supplies German spies with bogus plans of new British battleships, and takes the money for them as well?

And who got the £5,000 for the false plans of the "Invincible," which were sold to Von Tirpitz, and which resulted in the ill-fated German cruiser, "Blucher," being laid down four thousand tons short of the desired total?

Whether the British Government will follow Russia's example, and prohibit alcoholic liquors? And if they do, will there be a revolution?

Who started that absurd lie about King Manoel having met with a serious accident on the Portuguese frontier?

And did not his Majesty somewhat ostentatiously stroll down Pall Mall the same morning looking quite his old sober self?

Who was the bishop's son who nearly got arrested for bad language in the Strand?

Whether Mrs. Stirling will send a wreath to Lord Northland's bier? And whether Lord Ranfurly would let it lie there?

If the Italian Ambassador's frequent long confabs with Sir Edward Grey have anything to do with the persistent rumour that there will be a boom in the ice-cream industry when Italy "comes in" in the spring?

Why nobody has noticed the coincidence between Sir David Beatty "breaking off the action" when he approached the mine area, and the Japanese Admiral Ito doing a precisely similar thing on the occasion of his victory over the Chinese Admiral Ting, in 1894?

Whether a Harmsworth for the Home Office is an unmixed blessing, and whether a Radical Government without a Morley, a Burns, a Masterman, and an Tillingworth isn't somewhat of an anomaly?

If the "jubilee" tribute to Sir George and Lady Alexander wasn't thoroughly well deserved?

If Dr. Macnamara was very badly hurt at being passed over in the reconstruction of the Cabinet?

Why so few people have failed to grasp the significance of the British Mission to the Vatican as affecting Italy's attitude towards the crisis?

Which of our actor-managers is likely to stage Mr. Stephen Phillips's new drama based on the war?

If Captain Fox's "Have sunk the lot" squadron wouldn't make a capital (L) igoland fleet—the *Lance*, *Legion*, *Lennox* and *Loyal*?

The identity of the popular, if erratic, artist who, in an access of "frightfulness," mistook the Bedford Street Bodega for the Army and Navy Stores (next door), and ordered a chest-protector?

What is Sir Percy Scott's opinion of the submarine now?

What is the character of the "new" disease lately diagnosed by the doctors as having caused the death of two London men in December and January?

Whether the current January and February established a record for bad business in the publishing and book-selling world?

Why did the pretty lady with the "War Relief" collecting-box run away when we asked her if she had read the magisterial criticism of certain street-collecting funds?

Is it true that the "betting" at Lloyd's is 4 to 3 on the war being over by June 30, and 4 to 1 on it being over before the end of the year?

What is the name of the Peer who has just discovered that the family Stradivarius is a "fake"?

Is it true that the Society woman who started a shop to tide her over these hard times has already lost £1,000?

Was not the flapper right when she said that the Admiralty possessed the plainest staff in London?



"Your husband's a doctor, isn't he?"
"Oh no, not now! He's in the R.A.M.C."

TABLOID TOPICS.

The Kaiser has been quoting Knox, and the *Blucher* got them.

Dr. Hardegg, German Consul at Haifa, has gone to Nablus to preach Holy War. That hard egg must be cracked.

Apparently, next time Mr. Lloyd George starts robbing those hen-roosts M. Bark is going to have a bite out of the spoil.

"British force foe from a post at La Bassée," declares a heading, thus confirming our suspicion that the Germans are "up the pole."

"Four Turks Cross," said a *Westminster Gazette* headline. And a good many more will be before our Tommies have done with them!

"Terrible Battle with Germans," says a *Pall Mall Gazette* placard. So it must be true that the Germans have chipped in to this war at last.

In the Turkish attack upon the Suez Canal, says *The Times*, "Many were killed and drowned." We are glad to see that the motto of our Tommies in Egypt is "Thorough."

"Mrs. Katherine Macquoid, the nonagenarian novelist, entered upon her ninety-second year yesterday."—*Daily Mail*. She couldn't well do that without being a nonagenarian, could she?

Lord Rosebery has been appointed Captain of the Royal Bodyguard of Scottish Archers. So we may take it that he has abandoned the task of ploughing a lonely furrow, and will in future use an 'arrow.

"The Kaiser has given permission to the 21st Chasseurs to place skulls upon their headgear" (daily papers). And if the accounts of the weather conditions are true they ought to be extremely useful in the trenches.

Mr. Walter Long declared in the Talking Shop that the British troops "are fighting with brave hearts and clean hands." Brave hearts, we agree—but haven't we read somewhere about there being a trifle of mud in the trenches?

By the way, there should be one good result of the scarcity of brass in Germany. They will find some difficulty in manufacturing many of those German bands which in days gone by have been freely dumped upon our hospitable shores.

Professor Flamm, of the Charlottenburg Technical High School, declares that the loss of a British cruiser was denied because of the impending meeting of Mr. Lloyd George and the French and German Finance Ministers. Needless to remark this is mere flim-flamm.

"The Prussian Budget for 1915 shows: Ordinary receipts, 4,759 million marks; ordinary expenses, 4,583 million marks; extraordinary expenses, 255 million marks; extraordinary receipts, 58 million marks; therefore there is an excess of receipts of 38 million marks, which go to the Sinking Fund" (the *Times* report of German wireless message). It is another proof of the parlous state of affairs in Germany when Herr Wolff is allowed to exercise his imaginative powers upon cold, hard figures. By our reckoning, the addition to the Sinking Fund has been already sunk as surely as the *Blucher*.

The Editor will be pleased to consider short stories, 750 to 2,000 words, and humorous topical "skits" not exceeding 1,000 words. Payment at usual rates.

THE EVER PRESENT.

A Comedy of the Times.

Mrs. Brown heralded the day with her habitual recitative:

"George, you are late, as usual; and thank goodness there have been no Zeppelins over in the night."

"I rather doubt whether we should be here to notice it if they had," Mr. Brown remarked. "They are said to be destructive."

"Do you think for a moment I should worry myself about them if they were not, George? I know quite as well as you do the damage they could do, and, of course, if they hit our house with a bomb naturally we should all be killed. But what I mean was, suppose, for instance, that the bomb fell a little way away, say in the Jones's garden. . . . Well, then, of course, we should be sure to hear of it."

"Yes—I daresay the milkman might leave a note pinned to the milkcan," Mr. Brown said wearily, "in his very natural grief at losing such good customers."

Mrs. Brown spoke again, undaunted by his sarcasm.

"Did you see in last night's paper that there are a million Russians near that place with the awful name beginning with Z; or was it B?"

"It's all the same," said poor Brown, as he selected a tie, "since we neither of us have the slightest idea where it is."

"It will be bad for the Germans, won't it?" she queried wistfully.

"I'm sure I hope so," he returned. "Do you happen to know where my toothbrush is?"

"I daresay I gave it to baby," she said with a yawn. "I have to give him everything now to keep him quiet. I let him take my silver button-hook out yesterday, and he dropped it down a drain while I was telling Mrs. Nicholson about the Cossacks."

"Oh, that old tale again," snorted Brown. "Good lord, you would think that England was running alive with Cossacks from the way people talk. I never heard such a lot of nonsense. I wish you'd find my toothbrush for me, though, I'm ever so late."

"I haven't seen it," she said crossly. "You are always losing something or other. Did you see in yesterday's paper that some German artist was arrested for drawing a haystack? I wonder what on earth he was doing that for?"

"Oh, go and ask him; don't bother me about it," snapped irate Mr. Brown.

At breakfast, while he was eating, she started to read bits out of the morning paper to him.

"The whole of this article is about a place called ———," she murmured, drawing her brows together. "Now I wonder where it is?"

"Beastly salty bacon," Brown said savagely.

"Of course, we shall win," she continued. "But don't you think it's all very terrible? I'm sure if the Kaiser only heard my opinion of him, he'd feel very small. Mrs. Dickens's nephew has joined Kitchener's army. . . . He is a splendid tennis-player; I suppose that had something to do with it!"

Mr. Brown dug the spoon into the marmalade-pot.

"My dear girl, now do you think they want men in the army just because they are good tennis-players? What is the good of tennis to a man when the shells are all bursting around him and the enemy is deploying?"

"What is deploying?" she inquired with great interest. "Oh, I do wish I could understand all these terms. Why, only the other day I saw it explained that 'decimate' doesn't mean cutting off anyone's head. I was so glad about that. Those Turcos do very well, but they must miss their harems, what?"

"Turcos are not the same as Turks," said Brown impatiently. "The Turcos belong to France. Don't you remember reading about them in 'Under two flags'?"



à la "Cuirassier"



à la "Indes"



"Chapeau Zouave"



de "Chasseurs"



à la "maritime Française"

50
Addis

Paris 15.

"I've never read it," she said; "but I'll get it. Who is it by, now? Oh, of course, that German—Bernhardi—isn't it? I think it's two shillings, and in a bright yellow cover."

"Oh, good Lord," cried the exasperated Brown. "'Under two flags' is by Ouida. I thought everyone had read it."

Mrs. Brown resumed reading the paper, reading aloud casual bits of information like an impatient curate making literary mincemeat of one of the Lessons. He tried in vain to get a glimpse of the paper himself, and had to hurry off to the station without having looked at it.

He tumbled himself hastily into the first railway carriage he saw, and found himself opposite to Mr. Jones.

"Have you seen this morning's paper?" Mr. Jones cried in outraged tones.

"No, I didn't have time," sighed Brown.

"My dear fellow, the lies these Germans tell are too awful for words. I wish to goodness you and I had better eyesight, and could have got into the army. Lord, we'd have taught them better, eh, old man!"

"I wish to goodness I was at the front," said Brown slowly, "if only it was to get away from the newspapers. I'm fed up with 'em. People seem to find hawking war news about as the breath of life to them."

"Well, it's all very shocking," Jones agreed. "I don't know when it will all end. How long do you think the war will last?"

"Well, I really don't know," Brown snapped; "but if I'm anywhere near the War Office to-day, I'll ask the hall-porter."

"Well, you may make a jest of a serious matter if you like," said Jones ponderously. "But for my part I don't see anything to laugh at. It all must end somewhere."

"Exactly," said Brown. "That's what everyone says."

"The paper says to-day that there are 10,000 German wounded at ———, but I don't believe it. Our men are such splendid shots. I daresay the 10,000 may be the result of some little battle, but, of course, the Germans naturally paint everything in glowing colours and try to make their losses appear small. I'm sure they must have many more wounded than that. I say, did you hear that they have a lot of high officials imprisoned at Hampton Court Palace?"

"Stuff and nonsense," snorted Brown with contempt. "I never believe these silly rumours. Prisoners at Hampton Court! A lot of rot!"

"Oh well, if you choose to disbelieve all I say," Jones said haughtily, "that is your fault. One only repeats what one hears. I happen to know a man who has a second cousin whose nephew is at the Press Bureau, and I hear a lot of things from him. Besides, I have met a lot of Belgians over here, and, of course, I wouldn't repeat anything that was told me in confidence, but I heard that —"

The fat man in the corner suddenly interrupted their conversation.

"Oh, I must read you this," he cried, explosively. "It's the most splendid poem about the war I have seen yet."

He read it aloud, and they all became friendly over the verses.

"Ain't they fine?" he demanded admiringly. "Now I've got two sons at the front, and I know they'll do their duty by their King and country. . . ."

There was no stopping the fat man after that, and he held forth on the situation until they got to the terminus.

When Brown reached the office, he found his fellow-clerk reading. At once a page of illustrations was poked under his nose before he had got his coat off.

"Look at that," said the clerk tragically. "Doesn't it make you long to get the Kaiser and —"

"Oh, spare me," Brown implored. "I know of at least fifty horrible and agonising deaths suitable for

the Kaiser. Spare me another. I never could have believed that people were so blood-thirsty. Even my own wife wakes me up in the middle of the night to tell me what she'd do to the Kaiser if she could. Personally, I wish people would do more and say less about the war. I've just heard from the lift man that a railway porter of the highest reputation and importance told him that there are 50,000 Japanese troops camped in the Isle of Anglesea. He swears that they arrived via the Panama Canal, but as I read only yesterday that the canal is closed again, I really don't believe it."

"Neither do I," said the clerk. "But what I do believe is that report that the authorities discovered a Zeppelin shed in the Shetland Islands. One can quite understand. . . . Oh, bother, there's the 'phone."

At lunch Brown heard that seven spies had been taken from the café up the street, where they had been carrying on the profession of waiters.

At tea he heard that a submarine—unmistakably German—had been seen at Boulter's Lock by two children.

When the office closed he went to get a drink and heard that the Kaiser was reported to be expiring of some dangerous internal complaint.

Out in the streets again the placards assured him that the Kaiser was in the field among his troops.

In the train home he met a lady who had heard that everyone in Berlin was eating raw turnips because there was no more bread there.

His wife met him on the doorstep saying that she had just found out that their baker was of German descent on his mother's side, and someone had sent him a white feather in an envelope, which she had opened in mistake as the handwriting was so much like her sister's. After an exceedingly warlike dinner, Brown, in desperation, took his wife to the local music-hall. There was put before his jaded eyes a sketch woven round the Union Jack, and several young ladies and gentlemen further varied the monotony by singing "recruiting" songs, urging boys to "follow the drum," "rally round the flag," and do other things which those who feel inclined to can do quite easily without being sung to the recruiting-offices by a blonde soprano with thick ankles and the ruins of an influenza cold.

When they got home again the servant seemed bursting to impart some vital information.

"My married sister is calling her new baby after the King of the Belgians," she confessed at last with great pride. "And she says that her nurse told her that—"

The rest was whispered in Mrs. Brown's ear.

Brown stole off upstairs to bed.

Mrs. Brown presently came up to follow his example.

"I don't think there will be any Zeppelins about to-night," she said as she attacked the hooks and eyes on her dress. "The vicar said that they will probably come over on a foggy night, when no one can see them. George, how many Zeppelins have the Germans got altogether?"

And then George Brown began to pray.

C. N.

A kiss in time saves brine.

* * *

The man who waits for something to turn up generally finds it is his toes.

* * *

Elaborate arrangements have been made to guard Buckingham Palace, and the gardens are patrolled every evening by London's Super-Special Constables. The men chosen for this particular task include several peers, barristers and M.P.'s, and they are mightily proud of the job. All are of fine physique. They arrive at the Palace soon after 8.30 p.m., and work in two-hour shifts until the dawn. Warm beverages are supplied to them at the end of their spell.

ROUGE AND RUFFLES.

London's Lure.

What is the attraction about London? I can hardly myself imagine it as a big glass lamp, round the yellow heart of which thousands of young moths in the shape of silly girls dance helplessly, yet the Medical Officer of the London County Council says that women, especially young women, flock to town in a far greater degree than men of the same age. What for? "Husbands, of course," said a fair young thing contemptuously to me with a tilt of her pink chin. But wait a minute. Why bring coals to Newcastle? When there are so many girls already, why bring more to spoil the chances of those already there? To look for an eligible bachelor in London is like looking for a needle in the proverbial bundle of hay. If I were a girl in search of a husband I would hie me to Egypt or China or the Antipodes, where the number of men is greatly in excess of the woman supply, to look for work there. But there are too many unemployed women in London already. Every profession is overcrowded. In search of health? But who could breathe in smoke-filled air when the green breath of the country has filled our veins for years. To make good? But there are so many successful people already skimming the top of fame's cream. When your Marie Corellis and your Hall Caines and your Mrs. Pankhursts and your Charles Garvices get to work they don't leave much for the unknown fame-seekers. Why, then, do girls come to London? Why did I come myself? I don't know. They don't know. Perhaps it is because we are conscious that however powerless are our wings, they still are wings, and we must needs prove

them to be so, even if we only burn them to shreds upon the hot, hard glass of London life.

* * *

Gay Old Lotharios.

This is the time *par excellence* of the old, or perhaps I had better say middle-aged, young man. While the boys are away, turning into canvas ducks in the trenches, their fathers are busy taking out their sons' best girls—of course, only to please the sons! Wherever you go now, the best tables in all the best restaurants are occupied by beauty and her attendant cavalier, in the shape of a well-groomed, well-dressed, well-preserved man, with an eyeglass, white waistcoat and white hair. If the conversation is mostly of "my boy," none the less does the grey Lothario enjoy his tête-à-tête in public with a pretty girl. It may be that sometimes he finds it in his heart to bless a war that has given him back some of the sensations of his youth, when Beauty accompanied him willingly in gloss of satin and shimmer of pearls to supperland, and inclined her white shoulder towards him flirtatiously for his own sake instead of his son's. Anyway, quite a lot of prospective fathers-in-law seem to be having an amazingly good time now, and, incidentally, the girls they escort get much better dinners than they would if their Romeos were not roaming. Any young man can make love, but no man under forty can choose a banquet fit to place before Venus and exactly the right mark of champagne in which to drink her praise. A bird and a bottle of "the boy" is about all the average youth is capable of ordering in the way of a meal, but then, to him, mere eating and drinking is dross compared to the feast of love that lies spread before him in a pair of blue eyes, while the middle-aged man knows very well that even the gods would grow thin on a diet purely composed of ambrosia, and that there isn't a girl living who doesn't in her heart of hearts prefer forced asparagus and a pêche Melba to a handclasp and a kiss.

* * *

Pearls Before Swine.

Anybody want a string of pearls or a few diamonds? Because, if they do, they can have them for the price of a new hat. Coals and bread and milk and bacon and sugar and other silly little things like that may have gone up, but diamonds and pearls are going down. No reasonable offer refused, the jewellers are sadly saying, so that the shipowners will shortly be able to buy whole mines of Golconda out of their profits to bestow upon their wives, a token that although they may have only raised shipping freights instead of their arms in defence of their country, they are none the less truly patriots. Perhaps Mrs. Brown, of Paradise Row, Whitechapel, may find some consolation in her meagre shopping these days when she reflects that diamonds are almost as cheap to buy now as bread, and that she can have a pearl instead of a sack of coal if she likes. I say "perhaps," for women are strange creatures, and it may be that Mrs. Brown of Whitechapel might prefer jewels to remain at their normal cost, and her modest shilling still have its spending value when it comes to buying food and fuel for seven little hungry mouths. Yes, I quite agree, of course. Mrs. Brown is an improvident creature. She shouldn't have seven children if she can't afford to keep them. And, of course, Mr. Brown might get killed at the war, and goodness knows what would happen then. Yes, the poor are an improvident race. But I would sooner be Mrs. Brown than a shipowner with the Koh-i-noor for a collar-stud.

LOUISE HEILGERS.



TYPES OF THE TIMES.

No. 1.—The Special Constable.

The *Daily Telegraph* tells a moving story of a news-vendor in Paris being arrested and sentenced for crying "Arrest of Poincaré." Next time he will carefully avoid vulgar fractions in a city so polite as Paris.

BY THE WAY.

The ten o'clock closure rule, as affecting our places of amusement, is perhaps best illustrated by the anomaly of "Copperfield" at His Majesty's. Mr. L. N. Parker's "adaptation" is in four lengthy acts of many scenes. The interval after Act I. is two minutes. Act II. is in five long scenes, and the curtain descends on it at about 10.5 p.m.! I ask you, does one want to drink coffee or lemonade after sitting through two hours of tense comedy-drama? *Verb. sap.*

* * *

Among the many celebrities and others—principally others—who have been taken on by the Government as King's Foreign Service Messengers are, I see, Prince Arthur of Connaught and the Duke of Marlborough. The badge of these coronetted Jaggerses is a silver greyhound slung round the neck, but it has only to be worn on duty, and not (like a special constable's warrant-card or Gaby Deslys's pearls) day and night, in season and out. In normal times the lot of these greyhounds is a fairly easy one. The Foreign Office keeps a roster, and each man is called up for duty in turn; his name being placed bottom of the list automatically as he returns from a mission. The story goes that a "greyhound," who was spending a brief holiday at Madrid, after a longish job to Timbuctoo or somewhere and back, re-

ceived a wire from the F.O.: "You are fast and dirty. Return at once." The Spanish telegraph system is on a par with the Spanish railway ditto, so the recipient of this peremptory reminder was not long in coming to the conclusion that it had been somewhat mutilated in transmission, and originally read: "You are first for duty. Return at once." In which he was right.

* * *

As I happen to be the only journalist who has ever "interviewed" Sir Paolo Tosti ("he is so very nervous as to what the Royalties might think," as Lady Tosti phrased it to me), I am happy to be able to report that the septuagenarian composer of "My Dreams," "Good-bye," and "For Ever and for Ever" hailed with enthusiastic delight the news that his Italian countrymen were likely to take the "right" side in the world-war. It is odd indeed that Tosti, though a certain "shyness" has held him back from the common colloquialisms of our insular tongue, never accents the wrong word in his many glorious settings of English lyrics.

* * *

From information received, I conclude that there will be some attempt at a cricket season after all, though not in a County Championship sense. Those grounds which have not been "commandeered" by the authorities are to be utilised for Second Eleven and other fixtures, while the M.C.C. hope to play, more or less as usual, the Public Schools matches, etc. So the summer occupation of the sporting journalist won't be altogether gone, albeit we cannot hope to have anything in the nature of a "regular" playing season.

* * *

"The jobless man and the manless job" are, it appears, to be brought together under a scheme promulgated by the U.S. Board of Agriculture. Some 200,000 "field agents" (lovely name!) of that Department are to co-operate with the Department of Labour—I beg its pardon, "labor"—to this desirable end. Seriously, though, ought not something of the same kind to be attempted on this side? Heaven knows there is a sufficiency of unemployment here just now, and although the one and only John Burns is no longer with us, the Board of Trade and the L.G.B. might very well act together in such a vital matter. I should add that under the 'Murricean scheme applications may be filed with any postmaster.

* * *

A scene worthy of the best traditions of Palais Royal farce occurred the other morning at a biggish country house in Norfolk, where convalescent officers are being cared for. One guest had so far recovered from his wounds as to be able to have half-a-day's shooting. Returning weary and mud-stained, he went upstairs and had a warm bath. As he was drying himself, he felt and heard a severe spank on the back, while a female voice exclaimed, "That's for what you said last night!" The officer was so absolutely taken aback—no joke meant!—that for a second or so he did not turn round, but in the pier-glass he saw the hem of a skirt disappearing through the doorway. In vain he racked his brains for the solution of the mystery, but could not for the life of him remember having earned such a rebuke, nor, indeed, could he think of anybody in the house with whom he was on such spanking terms. But the solution was not long delayed. When he descended dressed, his host greeted him choking with laughter and annoyance mixed. "My wife's awfully upset, old man," he explained. "She thought I was having a bath just now, and it was only when she met me on the stairs half-a-minute after, that she found out she'd—er—you know." I believe the lock of that bathroom door has now been repaired.



GONE TO THE WAR?

Diner: "Walter, I don't think much of this chop."

New Walter: "I can't understand it, sir. You are the third gentleman as 'ave complained about that chop. I suppose I shall 'ave to give it to one of the reg'lar customers."

The absolutely idiotic and suicidal policy of leniency towards the enemy in our midst is bearing fruit in abundance. The German waiter is back again in our hotels and restaurants. More than that, the alien "turn" has crept back into the programmes of our music-halls. He—and she—is not billed as an Austrian, or German, or Hungarian, or Turk: that would mean rotten eggs and rude noises in the gallery. Oh, no; he—and she—goes out of the way to proclaim: "I am a Dane, or a Pole, or a Bulgarian," generally it is "Dane." This is wicked. For each alien turn on the bill one friendly turn has to make room. Every alien turn is either a spy or a prospective or a possible spy. Surely music-hall managers know this; the few I have ever met seemed particularly shrewd men. "When in doubt, pitch 'em out," would not be a bad motto for a management when offered a turn of suspicious nationality. Failing that peremptory course, it is perfectly easy to demand a view of passport or birth certificate. The matter has become—re-become, rather—a scandal. I hope Mr. Stoll and Mr. Butt are listening.

* * *

A weekly journal, with a large clientele among lift-boys and 'tweenie-maids, is running a series of interviews with second-class celebrities, who are invited to say in a few hundred words—not really their own words, but signed by them—why, when, how and where they took those early steps which, the copy-books used to tell us, count so much. A fine free advertisement for Mr. This and Miss That, wouldn't you say? The interviewer called the other evening on a humorous writer, the size of whose nose epitomizes his idea of his own importance, got what material he wanted, and a specimen signature to attach to the completed article. On leaving, he was rather staggered to be asked whether he had not brought the fee with him. "What fee?" asked the journalist. "The fee for the interview," was the answer. Still the journalist did not understand. "My fee?" he queried. "Oh, I am on salary, and I don't get—"
"Not your fee—mine," was the crushing retort; "thousand words, three guineas." That is what racing men call backing it both ways.

* * *

"The cavalry are not exactly enamoured of being in the trenches," says a cavalryman in conversation with a reporter of the Cocoa Press. No, I expect they are not. Nor are the infantry, so far as that goes. But our cavalryman goes on to recount an interesting incident illustrative of the resource exhibited by the swanky arm during the present crisis. He says he saw two Hussars busy digging themselves into cover with a bayonet and a soup-plate. The most suitable arm for the cavalry has for two decades been a debateable question, and, in view of recent experiences, I am not sure that there was not something in General Brabazon's answer to a member of the War Commission: "Personally, old boy, I should give 'em battle-axes!" "Bwab," as he was called, because though he had mastered the three r's, he could never manage the fourth, was pulling the War Commission's leg when he made the remark; but in a trench wouldn't a battle-axe be at least as useful as a sword, and, at a pinch, more so?



Minister (to Territorial who is about to get married before going to the Front): "And is your intended wife a spinster?"
Terrier (a country lad when at home): "No, sir. She's a dressmaker."

Lord Northland, who has been killed, had a soldier-servant of whom he was wont to tell an amusing yarn. This man was reputed to be the best "gentleman's gentleman" in the Coldstreamers, and Northland induced him, by dangling munificent wages before his eyes, to go to New Zealand with him when his father, Lord Ranfurly, went out as Governor. As Private Blank's then master—a major—was an exceedingly good and considerate employer, there was much anxiety in the man's mind as to how to break the alarming news that he had been lured away by filthy lucre. Several times he started to explain, and several times broke down—which was the more ludicrous in that Northland had already told the Major of the arrangement he had made! At length Private Blank burst into the major's room, closed the door, clicked his heels, drew himself up to his full six-feet-two, and gasped: "Beg pardon, sir, I've been seduced!"

* * *

The passing of Miss Braddon calls up a conversation which I enjoyed with the great Victorian novelist at her Richmond home some years ago. She told me that she was promised £10, but received £5, in complete payment for her first novel, originally known as "Three Times Dead," but afterwards altered to "The Trail of the Serpent." She felt a little hurt, too, when, long after, a judge of the Bankruptcy Court remarked that as Miss Braddon was now making "a good deal by her pen," she ought to come to the relief of her first publisher! She doubted if one living creature ever bought "Three Times Dead," and it was illustrated by a wood-block which would have been unworthy to illustrate a penny bun.

THE LOITERER.

IN STAGELAND.

In reply to a correspondent, Sir G. Alexander was born George Alexander Gibb Samson, at Reading, on June 19, 1858. His father was a Scottish manufacturer, whose son was quite "dotty" about amateur theatricals from boyhood. He was nearly twenty-one when he earned his first "professional" salary. Sir George has at the moment several new plays up his sleeve, of which, when a successor is wanted to "Kings and Queens," he will probably give the preference to a piece by Hartley Manners, of "Peg o' My Heart" fame, who, by the way, was formerly a member of the St. James's company.

Which reminds me—what a number of our dramatists have started as actors. That fellow Shakespeare himself, Pinero, Cyril Harcourt, Wm. Gillette, Hartley Manners, Cicely Hamilton—all were wearers of the sock and buskin, thus perfecting themselves for the "grimmer" business of writing plays for others to do their best or worst in. Which things are a parable.

At the Victoria Palace there is quite a lot to attract just at present. There is Jean Aylwin, very dainty and charming in Harry Grattan's diverting sketch, "A Careless Lassie." But the star turn is afforded by the members of the Russian Ballet, headed by Maria Baldina and Alexis Kosloff, in the ever-delightful "Les Sylphides." The public never seem to tire of this particular turn, and so say all of us.

Mr. Hunt-Helmsley, who is Sir George Alexander's manager, and, I believe, Martin Harvey's brother-in-law (and very unmistakably one of the b'hoys!), was met by me in khaki, and in a most unexpected part of the Town. Mr. Helmsley, who has for years been commissioned in the London Irish, is to all intents a professional soldier. He explained to me that he still manages to put in his afternoons and evenings at the St. James's, where business with "Kings and Queens" is booming. He is possessed of a tact and urbanity that

are invaluable from the point of view of West-End management.

"Are You a Mason?" has relinquished little of its old-time funniness, particularly as the present company at the Comedy have the good sense to take it at a rattling pace. This is especially true of Spencer Trevor (what a fine, manly comedian!), Ronald Squire, Marie Illington, and "Teddy" Dagnall, who take all their cues at lightning speed. Nor must I omit the extremely pretty and *piquante* Miss Joan Hay, who makes much of the rôle of "Annie." Indeed, scarcely one of the dozen characters in this diverting revival is underplayed or played too slowly. "Are You a Mason?" may not be essentially high art, but it is good art. Its laughter-making quality is needed at the moment, too, and I think it will enjoy a longish innings.

It is interesting to note that Hamish McCunn is conducting the Shaftesbury revival of "Tales of Hoffman." Also that Mr. Bob Courtneidge endeavoured to secure John Coates for this reproduction, but failed by reason of the famed tenor's military duties. However, artists like John Harrison, Edith Clegg, and Edith Evans should help to keep the flag flying.

My word, what heaps more revivals! At the Lyric we are getting "Florodora" (with Evie Greene and Julia James); at the Adelphi "The Three Musketeers" (with Ethel Warwick and Harcourt Williams); at the Adelphi, Messenger's delicious "Véronique"; and at the Kingsway, "Fanny's First Play."

I learn from New York that the accomplished Ethel Barrymore is scoring heavily in a new drama, "The Shadow," by Michael Morton. Also, that Charles Frohman has hurried up to secure the trans-Atlantic rights in the St. James's success, "Kings and Queens." Finally, I was bidden to the dress rehearsal of the first touring company going out with that emphatic success, "The Man Who Stayed at Home," but couldn't get there in time.

THE UNDERSTUDY.

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OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

RIGHT BACK.

Lady (after singing a few rusty notes): "Don't you think my voice should be brought out?"

Manager: "No; pushed back!"

SPOKE TOO LATE.

She: "You married me for my money."

He: "Well, no use to grieve over it now. It's all gone."

STAGGERING.

Nell: "How do you like my new photograph?"

Belle: "Lovely! I never should have known that it was you."

AT LAST!

Mrs. Henpeck: "I have come to the conclusion——"

Mr. Henpeck: "Thank heaven!"

DEPENDS ON THE GIRL.

Sillicus: They say it is bad form to propose to a girl on your knees.

Cynicus: My dear fellow, it is bad form to have a girl on your knees whether you propose to her or not.

Town Topics (New York).

IN ARREARS.

Friend: This is a nice studio you have. Is the rent high?

Artist: I don't remember.

—Cleveland Leader.

But—"Confession is good for the soul."

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